



## **Identifying Your United Nation Product and/or Service Code A Guide**

### **Search Directions:**

1. Go to <http://www.unspsc.org>
2. Click on "Search the Code" at the top of the page
3. Enter a product or service description in the "Search Title" box

**Tip:** Use "%" as a wild card. For example, entering "%Clamp%" will return all codes containing the word "clamp". From there you can determine specific clamps that may pertain to your business. (Note: enter "%Clamp%" without the quotation marks in the actual search).

### **What is the UNSPSC?**

The United Nations Standard Products and Services Code is a hierarchical convention that is used to classify all products and services. It is the most efficient, accurate and flexible classification system available today for achieving company-wide visibility of spend analysis, enabling procurement to deliver on cost-effectiveness demands and allowing full exploitation of electronic commerce capabilities. The UNSPSC was jointly developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Dun & Bradstreet Corporation (D & B) in 1998.

### **How does UNSPSC work?**

The UNSPSC is a hierarchical classification with five levels. These levels allow analysis by drilling down or rolling up to analyze expenditures. Each level in the hierarchy has its own unique number.

XX Segment - The logical aggregation of families for analytical purposes

XX Family - A commonly recognized group of inter-related commodity categories

XX Class - A group of commodities sharing common characteristics

XX Commodity- A group of substitutable products or services

XX Business Function - The function performed by an organization in support of the commodity



All UNSPSC entities are further identified with an 8-digit structured numeric code which both indicates its location in the taxonomy and uniquely classifies it. An additional 2-digit suffix indicates the business function identifier.

A structural view of the code set would look as follows:

*(example)* Hierarchy Category Number & Name

Segment 43 - Information Technology Broadcasting and Telecommunications Communications  
Devices and Accessories

Family 20 - Components for information technology or broadcasting or  
telecommunications Computer Equipment and Accessories

Class 15 - Computers Computer accessories

Commodity 01 - Computer switch boxes Docking stations

Business Function 14 Retail

### **How do I find a product or service in the code?**

The easiest way to find the codes that you are searching for is to do a search of the codeset. Go to: <http://www.unspsc.org/> and Click on "Search the Code" at the top of the page. We suggest entering a description in the "Search Title" box. It can be a partial description; use "%" as a wild card. For example, entering "%Clamp%" will return all codes containing the word "clamp". From there you can determine specific clamps that may pertain to your business.

Sometimes a commodity may not be found because:

- Different phrases are used in different regions. For example, the term "cooling exchanger" is the same commodity as a "heat exchanger"; "allen wrenches" are the same commodity as a "hex key".
- The item may be described by what it is rather than how it is used.
- The code is only searchable in English (this will soon change)

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